Floor price for rubber

*100. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI R. GANESAN *alias*
MISA R. GANESAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently announced floor (Minimum) price for rubber; and

(b) if so, when it was announced and what is its resent market price?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY): (a) Government does not announce any floor (minimum) price for natural rubber. However, as in the past, it has recently announced the benchmark price of Rs. 21,450 per metric tonne for RMA-4 Grade natural rubber.

(b) The benchmark price was announced on 15th January, 1991. The present market prices for RMA-4 and RMA-5 Grades of natural rubber are Rs. 21,150 and 20,3000 per metric tonne respectively.

Amount of various Construction companies blocked in Iraq and other Arabian countries

456. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large sums of a number of Indian construction companies have been blocked in Iraq and other Arabian countries due to the outbreak of the Gulf War;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In terms of the Deferred Payment Agreement signed in March. 1990 with the Government of Iraq, dues of the order of US$ 85 million were expected to be released during 1990-91through purchase of crude oil from Iraq. However, till August 1990 dues to the tune of US $ 21.17 million only were realised. In view of the economic embarge imposed by the UN Security Council on 6th August. 1990 on trade with Iraq and Kuwait the balance amount could not be realised by purchase of crude oil from Iraq. Similarly, approximately US $ 1.8 million dues are held up in Kuwait.

(c) Repatriation/Recovery of dues can be taken up only after the lifting of economic sanctions by UN Security Council on Iraq and Kuwait.

Manufacture of narcotics

457. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been urged to allow the manufacture of narcotics used for anaesthetic purposes as it would save a huge amount of foreign exchange; and

(b) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Setting up Food Processing Units in Orissa

453. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any applications either from the private or the public sector to set up Food Processing Units in Orissa;